13| ritory is close to the railroad which runs
10| through the town of Zamora to Los Reyes. The southern boundary might be defined roughly as on a line from Los Reyes to Uruapan and thence close to the railway from Uruapan to Pátzcuaro, while the new highway from Mexico City to Guadalajara in some places runs just inside the northern limits and in others, just outside. Within or near the borders of the present-day Tarascan area occur a number of old Mexican towns closely associated with the historic Tarascans and their contemporary culture, which provide the administrative centers and the major market places. These towns are
[361] Pátzcuaro, Zacapu, Purépero, Zamora, Los Reyes, and Uruapan. In some instances other
[563] towns of local importance have arisen more recently, towns which were once Tarascan but are now occupied by Mestizos and deculturated Tarascans. A good example of such a town is Chilchota.

13 Viewed as a whole, the Tarascan area may be characterized generally as an elevated temperate region of sufficient rainfall, deep volcanic soils, and pine or mixed pine and hardwood forests. In detail there are differences, and a number of regions may be identified.

The easternmost region is that about Lake
[361] Pátzcuaro. The lake has an elevation of slightly over 7,000 feet, and most of the villages are either on the shore or upon islands in the lake. The forests have been cleared away
[31] around the lake except upon lands too steep to cultivate with the plow. Rainfall is heavy, but is concentrated in the summer months. The climate is temperate and cool even in midsummer.

North of Lake Pátzcuaro is a large fertile valley or depression near Zacapu, ringed about by hills and mountains covered with forest. Although there is but little difference in elevation from Lake Pátzcuaro, the climate is warmer and some tropical or subtropical plants such as sugarcane are grown on a small scale.

Over a range of mountains to the west of Zacapu is a fertile valley known as La Cañada. Here the climate is warmer and more arid, as
[912] is evidenced by the frequency of irrigation and
[241] extensive cultivation of citrus fruit, bananas, and similar tropical and subtropical plants.

[text continues on p. 7a]

13 West of Lake Pátzcuaro and south of La Cañada is the rugged area known as La Sierra, extending as far west as the town of Tinguindín. This region is relatively homogeneous, with an essentially temperate climate. Although the elevation of towns varies from about 6,000 feet to about 9,000 feet, generally the temperature is cool. Heavy rainfall and the presence of numerous 10,000-foot peaks apparently combine to prevent cultivation of most subtropical plants. Extensive steep, forested slopes and lava flows are interspersed with numerous valleys and depressions in a high state of cultivation. Only in the west, where rainfall apparently is less, are a few towns favored by a milder climate. South of La Cañada and about
133 equidistant from Uruapan, Zacapu, and Pátzcu-
● [361] aro is Cherán, largest of the mountain Tarascan towns and, until very recent years, one of the most isolated.

Situated on a sloping bench, Cherán looks westward over a long depression, dotted with villages and interrupted here and there by cinder cones rising as much as a thousand feet above the depression (pl. 1, upper and lower, left). North and south of Cherán, the series of peaks which bound the depression to the west culminate in two 10,000-foot cones. Eastward is another smaller basin of fertile soil, similarly marked by cinder cones and by the striking isolated volcanic peak of El Pilón, also over 10,000 feet in height.

137 Except for occasional marginal farm clear-
[311] ings, the steeper slopes, and those areas where relatively recent lava flows make cultivation impossible, are covered with forest. The predominant species are three or four types of pine, but completely pure stands are rarely found. Usually there is a fair intermixture of oak and madroña, while, beginning at the level of Cherán, fir trees occur and increase in number at higher elevations. These forest lands provide one of the important resources of the Cherán population.

311 Wherever the land is sufficiently level to permit regular cultivation, the forest has been almost entirely cleared away. In many places, areas hundreds of acres in extent are continuously cultivated. Maize and, to a much smal-
311 ler extent, wheat, are almost the only field
241 crops. Cultivation of these, plus exploitation

311 of the forest resources and the breeding of a
241 few sheep and cattle, provide the sustenance of the great majority of Cherán's population.

The town of Cherán has a population of
632 about 5,000. The community is unique among
162 Tarascan towns, not only for its large size—
361 almost 2,000 more than that of any other settlement—but because the *municipio* of the same name contains only two, unimportant rancherias. Most *municipios* in the Tarascan area consist of one moderately large settlement, the *cabecera*, and a surrounding group of small settlements known as *tenencias*, and still smaller communities known as rancherias or by other classificatory terms. Usually the total populations of these *municipios* approximate the population of Cherán or even exceed it. Consequently, the unique feature of the *municipio* of Cherán is the concentration of almost the entire population in the *cabecera*.

Despite the concentration of population in the
632 *cabecera*, the *municipio* of Cherán comprises
311 a large area. Much of this area is mountain
578 and forest, but there are many relatively large tracts of arable land (maps 2, 3). This circumstance, in part at least, has been the cause of numerous boundary disputes and some loss of territory. The most notable recent loss of territory has been the secession of the one *tenencia* of Cherán, the rather large settlement of Cheranástico to the northwest, which seceded in 1939 and joined the *municipio* of Paracho. The immediate cause of this secession again appears to have been a boundary dispute between the *tenencia* and the *cabecera*.

Cherán differs from the ordinary Tarascan
361 agricultural village only in size. Throughout the area the type of settlement is the compact village. Probably in most cases the villages represent settlements of Spanish type, with a central plaza about which are the church (sometimes not actually on the plaza), the municipal building, and, more recently, the school. From the central plaza radiates a rectangular grid of streets, modified only where necessitated by the irregular terrain (maps 4, 5). In the case of a large settlement such as Cherán, there usually exists some fragmentary legend of origin of the settlement through amalgamation of aboriginal groups dispersed

[text continues on p. 12a]

1: Beals E-5 (1940-1941) 1946 NU34 Tarasco NU34
Sierra Tarascans

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[p. 10]

MAP 4.—The town of Cherán, showing the distribution of house types and specialists. The fine line bordering streets indicates vacant property. The medium line indicates the presence of wooden structures without masonry (although the lot may be walled with masonry). The heavy line indicates the presence of masonry or adobe structures. The majority of the latter also have one or more wooden structures on the same lot. Location of the majority of the specialized businesses or occupations is shown. The numbers refer to the house numbering system as of 1940.

[p. 12a]

361 in smaller communities in the nearby mountains.

361 In the absence of documentary evidence, it may be surmised that Cherán is an old settle-
174 ment. Archeological remains occur at several nearby places which may represent the antecedent smaller aboriginal settlements spoken of in tradition. About the period from the founding of the original settlement until 1910 there are few data, documentary or traditional. Although individuals were encountered who claimed to remember the time of the French intervention in Mexico, apparently events in the rest of the country influenced Cherán very little. Some outside settlers apparently lived in the town before 1910. Frequent references
[167] were made to a German family that owned a considerable amount of land and had a pretentious house on the plaza, now in ruins. Physical evidence in the shape of ruined structures suggests there once were a number of families of greater wealth in the town than is now the case, but apparently, with the exception noted, these families were native Tarascans.

361 During the revolutionary period, the town was in the center of the agrarian movement in
175 Michoacán. This movement was related to the Zapatista movement in Morelos, and residents of other villages claim to have been Zapatistas. As Michoacán is also a Catholic stronghold, some villages participated in the religious wars of the twenties. Cherán, however, seems not to have taken an active part in any of these movements. Nevertheless, it suffered from them, and more particularly from the generalized banditry which operated under the cover of one label or another. Twice the town was attacked and burned in the period shortly before 1920, the last time being almost completely destroyed. Apparently many hundreds were killed or starved to death, while still more made their way to the United States, starting a migration which continued until 1929. Since that time, the tide of migration has been to the town. Probably a majority of families in town, though, have been in the United States or have relatives still living in the States.

137 Some general details of the flora of Cherán have already been mentioned. Nothing can be added to these remarks, as the region is un-
136 studied botanically. The situation with respect

1:Beals E-5 (1940-1941)1946 NU34 Tarasco NU34
Sierra Tarascans

The general situation of the *municipio* has already been discussed in the first section of this paper. That discussion and maps 1, 2, and 3 indicate the main features, and no further amplification seems necessary.

The *municipio* has fairly well defined boundaries, although there are usually disputes with neighboring communities. Thus Cherán currently has disputes with Cheranástico and Arantepacua. The boundaries are marked in various ways. In the cultivated areas the boundaries are marked with stone walls. Where water courses form the boundaries, no markers are placed, but in the woods, a strip 4 or 5 meters wide is cleared along the boundary. This is done by communal labor, and when the line needs clearing again an assembly is called and a day fixed for the work. Every male is supposed to go. The Municipal Representative (described later) is supposed to lead the party.

THE TOWN AND ITS SUBDIVISIONS

Cherán is a compact and essentially urban settlement with a population of about 5,000. Few North Americans, unfamiliar with the concentrated settlement forms of Mexican towns, would imagine it contained anything like this population. There are no suburbs and very little straggling out of houses from the main center. Around the outskirts the lots are a little bigger and the density of population is less but the transition from town to open fields is nevertheless abrupt.

The layout of the town is undistinguished. A central plaza with a fountain, *portales* or sidewalks covered with arches about it, the municipal building, school, priest's residence, and church may be duplicated in hundreds of Mexican towns. The plaza is not today the center of the settlement geographically. Undoubtedly the town has grown since the time of its founding, and because of the deep *barranca* to the north, expansion has been in the other directions, leaving the plaza north of the present center of town by two or three blocks.

Radiating from the plaza is a network of streets laid out in a rectangular grid which makes only minimal concessions to the irregularities of the terrain. The enclosed blocks or *manzanas* are utilized as administrative divi-

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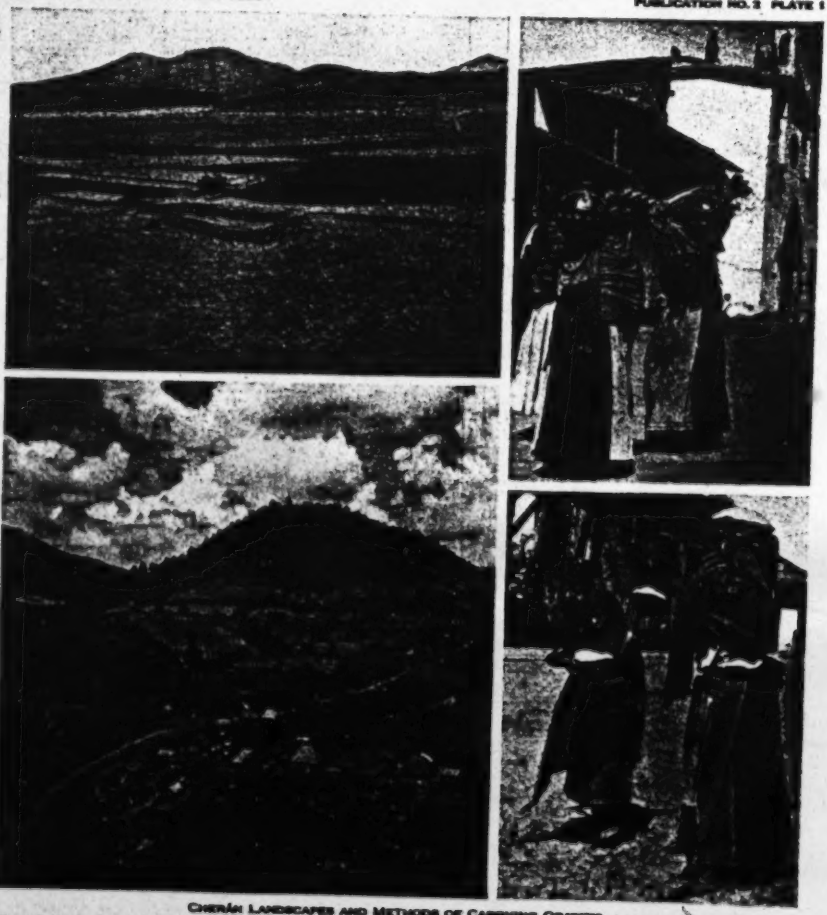

CHERÁN LANDSCAPES AND METHODS OF CARRYING OBJECTS.

Upper (left): The plains below Cherán, the major agricultural area, about 7,000 feet elevation, viewed from the highway, near southeast corner of the town. Darker portions are plowed fields; the remainder not yet plowed. *Upper (right)*: Women carrying water in typical manner, with the usual Cherán water jar. A method of wearing the rebozo is shown. The church and priest's residence are in background. *Lower (left)*: The northwest barrio of Cherán. The new highway curves along the edge of the barranca. Typical cultivated fields slope gently up to the cinder cone, which rises 1,000 feet above the town. *Lower (right)*: Carrying heads of maize (corn ground for tortillas) from the mill. Carrying on the head is unusual, but the method used by the girl is common for small objects. The woman's skirt has the thick plait or rolls.

[End Plate 1]

114 by one or more of the authors included the following:

Sierra region:
- Ahuiran
- Angahuan
- Aranza
- Capacuaro
- Charapan
- Cherán
- Cocucho
- Corupo
- Nahuatsen
- Nurió
- Paracho
- Parangaricutíro
- Parícutin
- Patamban
- Pomacuarán
- Quinseo
- San Felipe
- San Lorenzo
- Tarecuato
- Urapicho
- Zirosto

La Cañada:
- Acachuén
- Carapan
- Chilchota
- Huáncito
- Ichán
- Santo Tomás
- Tacuro
- Tanaquillo
- Urén
- Zopoco

Lake Pátzcuaro:
- Cucuchucho
- Huecorio
- Ihuatzio
- Janicho
- Jarácuaro
- Tecuena
- Tzentsénhuaro
- Tzintzuntzan
- Tzurumútaro
- Yunuán

[continued on p. 6b]

THE TARASCAN TOWN

361 Tarascan towns tend to be located on level, or relatively level ground. Exceptions are found only in a few villages located in the higher mountains such as Quinseo, Cocucho, and others. Ex-
[363] cept where the irregularities of the terrain prohibit, the towns are subdivided by streets forming rectangular blocks oriented approximately to the compass points (pl. 1, upper). This is undoubt-
[177] edly a reflection of the Spanish origins of these towns; in many of the settlements traditions of former locations still exist. The blocks are subdivided into lots, or *solares*, of quite variable size, which are used both as building sites and gardens. Usually, the lots are fenced, particularly on the side facing the street. Houses either may adjoin the street line or may be located well within the lot away from the street. In the center of the larger towns, structures are more apt to adjoin the street, but the doors of living quarters almost always open on the yard rather than the street.

In the Lake region, the fishing villages tend to
[363] be on the edge of the water. As a result, some of the smaller villages, such as Tecuena and Yunuán, do not have streets but merely paths. Where the ground is very uneven, as at Janicho

[p. 6a] [continued bottom of page 6-b]

114 In the last area, information was also secured from residents of Cuanajo and Puácuaro, but these villages were not visited.

115 Many informants were used, but those most employed in Cherán were Pedro Chávez and Agustín Rangel; in Paracho, Maximino Estrada, master carpenter; and in Angahuan, the brothers José and Miguel Bravo.

104 Tarascan words are written in the alphabet approved by the Consejo de Lenguas Indígenas. Unless otherwise indicated, Tarascan words are from Paracho or Cherán (the two are only 6 miles apart, and dialect differences are slight). Spanish words are italicized, but if the word has a special regional meaning not found in standard dictionaries, it is placed in quotations and the meaning is explained the first time the word is used. Names of towns are in the local Spanish spelling.

THE TARASCAN TOWN

361 on the Lake and some of the Sierra villages, such as Urapicho, the plan is irregular and the streets have steps.

If the town is of any size, it usually is divided into from two to four districts known as *cuarteles*, or *barrios*. The town tends to center on a plaza, where usually is to be found a municipal building, the school, and the church, although the latter may not be directly upon the plaza. In most [764] cases, a fenced cemetery exists before the church, but in some towns it has been replaced by a new cemetery on the outskirts. A stone cross still stands in the center of the cemetery in most towns.

342 Two clearly defined types of construction exist in the Tarascan area: wood, and a combination of adobe bricks and stone masonry laid in adobe mortar. In the region of the Sierra, the majority of houses are of wood with shake roofs. Adobe-and-masonry construction with tile roofs predominates in the region around Lake Pátzcuaro, the district of Zacápu, the region known as La Cañada, and the district of Zamora. The division, however, is not absolute. Adobe-and-masonry structures, sometimes with tile roofs, sometimes with shake roofs, are found in most of the towns of the Sierra, especially in the larger settlements and

where Mestizo influence is marked. Nevertheless, in some towns, such as Capacuaro, almost the only nonwooden structure is the church. Structures of wood also occur in the other districts, although they are relatively rare.

The difference in materials used apparently has a geographic basis. The Sierra region has abundant forests, while often lacking sufficient water to permit easy manufacture of adobes or

[continued on p.7b]

The Town of Cherán THE TOWN

The town of Cherán lies at the head of a broad valley about 1,300 feet (400 m.) above the valley floor at an elevation of 8,500 feet (2,500 m.) (pl. 1, lower). The terrain slopes rather steeply toward the west. A small ravine forms the western half of the south boundary of the town; the eastern half of the south boundary lies beyond the ravine. A much larger ravine forms the north boundary of the town. A branch of this ravine runs through the town and partly isolates the northeast *barrio*, or *cuartel*. Springs at the bottom of this ravine afford part of the water supply. A pipe-and-wooden-trough system also brings water from a spring 9½ miles (15 km.) away to cement tanks in the approximate center of the town as well as to a fountain in the plaza, which lies north of the center. At the northeast is a small cinder cone, which affords most of the stone used for buildings and fences. The town encroaches on the slopes of the cone on the east and south. The northeast *barrio*, or *cuartel*, climbs part way up the slopes of another cinder cone.

Most of the streets of the town are oriented to the cardinal directions, and the central part of town is subdivided into rectangular blocks. In some sections irregularities of the terrain have led to modifications of the block plan; in these sections streets may follow the curving contours. Streets vary in width from mere pathways to about 40 feet (12.2 m.). In the heart of town they are often paved with small cobblestones and have a central drain or gutter. Stone-paved sidewalks are common in the middle of town. The main north–south street is traversed by the Carapan-Uruapan highway and was paved with oil macadam in 1940.

[p.7a] [continued bottom of page 7-b]

342 tiles. The other areas have abundant water, but the forests are distant. An exception is the Sierra town of Tarecuato, where, despite abundant forests and the relative scarcity of water, most of the houses are of adobe. In the Sierra it is also becoming increasingly difficult to secure materials for large houses. This fact, together with Mestizo [177] influence, probably is contributing to the spread of adobe, or stone-and-adobe construction.

OF CHERÁN The Town of Cherán

●361 The church, parish residence, school, and the municipal building all front on a central plaza. Except for benches and a fountain, the plaza 363 is bare. Cement sidewalks and a surrounding paved area are contributions from the highway construction.

361 The width of the building lots varies from 10 or 12 feet (3 to 3.6 m.) to almost an entire block. 351 The depth in most cases is half that of the block, but in some cases it may be little more than 20 feet (6 m.). As a general rule, however, except in the center of town, the lot is large enough for a small garden, a few fruit trees, and at least a small area devoted to growing types of corn not ordinarily cultivated in the fields (fig. 2). The size of lots varies appreciably, though, in various sections of town. There is no general rule for placing the house upon the lot except in the center of town, where it usually abuts the street, especially if it is of adobe-and-masonry construction. If the house does not front on the street, a fence, generally of stone, is built along the street line. It usually is designed to keep out all animals including pigs, and customarily is above head height so passers-by may not peer over. The interior boundaries are also fenced, but the fences are often less substantial (pls. 2, lower; 3).

351 The lots are all owned individually. They may be bought or sold freely and may be subdivided in 423 various ways. A man with a large lot may sell a portion, creating two lots. Sometimes a man who may wish to enlarge his holdings will buy a strip from an adjoining lot or even the entire lot and merge the two pieces into a single lot. Heirs may also divide lots.

[p. 76]

3: Beals, Carrasco & McCorkle E-5 (1940-1942)1944 NU34 Tarasco NU34
Sierra Tarascans

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Upper: Angahuan, showing the rectangular arrangement of streets and the large lots. *Lower:* A portion of the town of Cherán, viewed from the hill in the northwest section, which furnishes most of the stone used in building.

[End plate]

133 stream.[5] Both lakes present similar shore features—moderately steep banks alternating with wide, flattish delta fans.

In other respects the two lakes are distinct. Pátzcuaro is shallow (deepest point in the southern arm, 20 feet; in the northern part, 50 feet, in 1941); Zirahuén is relatively deep (148 feet, maximum sounding). Moreover, while the level of Zirahuén (6,953 feet in 1942) is relatively stable, that of Pátzcuaro (6,671 feet in 1942) has fluctuated frequently in historical times. Since 1939 the lake level has descended nearly 4 feet, exposing large areas of mud flats along the shore and revealing one new island (Pastora) near the southwest corner of the lake (pl. 1). In some places the descending waters have uncovered old tree stumps, indicating that formerly the lake level was even lower than at present. On the other hand, the western portion of the large lacustrine plain of Chapultepec in historical times formed an eastward extension of the lake's southeast arm, denoting a former level higher than the present one.[6] The cause of fluctuation in level is not clear.

[132] De Buen (1944), judging from meteorological data (1939–43), has suggested a correlation between rainfall and evaporation variation on the one hand and lake surface fluctuation on the other. The excessive evaporation and low rainfall during those years likely affected lake volume, but normal precipitation and evaporation in following years have not halted the gradual decrease in lake level. Moreover, if fluctuation is caused by meteorological elements, one would expect neighboring lakes to be similarly affected. Periodic clearing and clogging of sublacustrine crevices, often associated with lakes of volcanic origin, is another popular hypothesis applied to Lake Pátzcuaro.

133 The lake contains 10 islets on which live some
● 361 of the most conservative of the Tarascan people—the fishermen. The four islands off the Tarıu-k'éri Peninsula (Pacanda, Yunuén, Tecuena, and Janitzio) are old volcanic hilltops with steep banks and, with the exception of flat-topped Pacanda, with little land suitable for cultivation. In the

[5] De Buen (1944) assigns the origin of all present and former lakes in the western portion of the Mesa Central to disruption of normal drainage by vulcanism. He also suggests that Lakes Patzcuaro, Zirahuén, Cuitzeo, and Yuriria were formed from portions of Rio Lerma drainage, since the fish *Chirostoma*, abundant in Lake Chapala and the Lerma, is found also in these lakes, the number of species decreasing from Chapala (10) to Zirahuén (2).

[6] The 16th-century map of Lake Pátzcuaro which accompanies the Relación de Michoacán (1903) clearly shows the former extent of the southeastern arm. At the time of the Conquest this section included the island of Apupato, now a hill some 300 m. from the water's edge.

4: West K-5 (1946) 1948 NU34 Tarasco NU34
[P. 48]

[33] shallow southern part of the lake lie Jarácuaro, [361] the largest of the group, and the newly formed Pastora. (The former island of Copujo is now attached to the mainland.) Both islands are low, composed of semiconsolidated alluvial materials. Along the southern shore only low marsh now separates the Urandén islets (low volcanic hills) from the mainland (pl. 1).

The southern escarpment.—Although geologically similar to the Sierra, the abrupt southern escarpment, which forms part of the Mesa Central's southern wall, constitutes a distinct physiographic area. Pleistocene and Recent vulcanism continues from the Sierra to the Balsas and Tepalcatepec Rivers, Jorullo having been the most recent volcanic activity on the escarpment. The canyons formed by deeply entrenched spring-fed streams are the escarpment's salient features. Some barrancas exceed 500 feet in depth. The upper tributaries of the escarpment streams are eroding headwardly into the Sierra, capturing enclosed basins and intermittent water courses.[7] Above the barranca area shallow basins occur in the upper portion of the escarpment. Probably of volcanic origin, these flattish-floored valleys are now tapped by escarpment streams. Typical examples are the plains surrounding Uruapan, those below Peribán and Los Reyes, the valleys of Tingambato and Tacambaro, all important sites of former Tarascan settlement in the *tierra templada*.

The northern plateau area.—The former Tarascan area north of the Sierra forms part of the interior plateau county of Central Mexico. For the most part physiography is characterized by old volcanic hills and mountains separated by flat to rolling plains country. The part of this region formerly inhabited by Tarascans extends from Lake Chapala east to the Sierra de Ozumatlán and from the Sierra north to the Lerma River. (The low areas near the river and its tributaries are often termed the "Bajío.") A narrow belt of the hill and plains landscape also extends south from Lake Chapala to include the Cotija-Tingüindín area along the western side of the Sierra. Average elevations in the interior plateau decrease from 7,200 feet along the flanks of the Sierra de Ozumatlán to 5,000 feet at Lake Chapala. The

[7] For example, this phenomenon has occurred at the southwestern edge of the Sierra, where a tributary of the Tepalcatepec has apparently captured the drainage of the structural basin which runs east-west from Paracuaro-tiro to Peribán.

133 higher hills and mountains rise 2,600 to 4,000 feet above the surrounding plains.

The young volcanic land forms found in the Sierra are lacking in much of the northern area, where the principal elevations consist of eroded composite Tertiary volcanoes. A few tongues of Recent lava flow from the Sierra into the northern edge of the plains, and cinder cones extend northward from El Zirate. Many lakes, some occupying structural basins, dot the northern area. The extensive sections of old alluvium, which form a good part of the plains, probably represent beds of Pleistocene lakes. At the northern and northwestern base of the Sierra many spring-fed lakes and marshes existed in historical times, e. g., Ciénaga de Zacapu, de Tangancícuaro, de Chapala, etc. The lacustrine basins and the borders of the former lakes and marshes were the major areas of Spanish settlement in the Tarascan North, for both afforded year-round pasture and sites for irrigated wheat farms. Some marshy sections [311] still exist, but natural desiccation and artifical drainage have converted much of the wet area to dry farmland. The once extensive chain of lakes in the Cotija graben, west of the Sierra, has almost completely disappeared, and the marshes of Zacapu, around which are grouped a few remnant Tarascan pueblos, have been converted into a large farming area.

A unique physiographic subarea of the northern zone, called "La Cañada," a narrow east-west depression at the northern base of the Sierra, is still one of the significant Tarascan regions. The valley floor, 10 km. long and 2 km. wide, decreases rapidly in altitude from 6,360 feet at its eastern end to 5,840 feet at Chilchota, near the western extremity (pl. 1). The western end of the valley is marked by an ancient lava flow, which once partially blocked normal drainage. Subsequent deposition of alluvium (posibly lacustrine) behind the lava dam has resulted in the present wide flattish floor of the valley's western half. Today the stream draining the valley flows subsequently through a deep gorge cut through the northern end of the lava flow. The numerous intermittent streams which descend from the adjacent hills have built up small alluvial fans along the valley sides. Like other areas at the edge of the Sierra, [312] La Cañada is favored by numerous large springs [361] issuing from fissures at the southern and eastern borders of the depression. Alluvium and water

133 [312] [361] [102] have attracted human settlement to the valley since prehistoric times. Sierra Tarascans, who call La Cañada "Eráśemen" (view from above), probably visited the valley for chile and early maize before the Spanish Conquest. Spaniards immediately seized the well-watered plains near Chilchota for wheat fields. Today La Cañada is a garden spot of orchards and wheat fields amid rocky volcanic hills.

CLIMATE AND VEGETATION

132 **Meteorological data.**—In dealing with meteorology, northwestern Michoacán will be treated as a whole; attempts will be made to point out regional differences in temperature and rainfall. Meteorological stations in the area are few; data are entirely lacking for the Sierra. Consequently, only general statements can be made concerning the weather and climate of modern Tarasca.

191 Nor was the region's winter climate an induce-
177 ment.[27] The religious had penetrated all Indian settlements in the Sierra and Lake areas; every pueblo was under an absentee *encomendero* to whom tributes in money, grain, or handicrafts were paid periodically. But the Indians had little contact with the Spanish tongue. By 1750, however, some Spanish families, probably traders, had settled in a few Sierra market towns (Patamban, Paracho, Nahuatzen, Corupo), and in 1800 the towns of Charapan and Parangaricutiro also contained one or two Spanish families.[28] A large part of the inhabitants of those pueblos today speak only Castilian (map 12). After independence in 1822, a few Spaniards or mestizos established agricultural settlements on the Sierra, e. g. the *rancho* of Arato, now a pueblo 10 km. west of Paracho.

361 Although the Tarascan area first to harbor
191 Spaniards was the Lake region (Pátzcuaro, Tzint-
177 zuntzan), some of its pueblos have succeeded in preserving the native tongue. Such towns are located on the islands and in isolated positions on the shore (northwestern edge of the lake, and the Tarıu-k'éri Peninsula). By 1750 numerous Spanish haciendas and mestizo *ranchos* existed along the southern, southwestern, and northeastern borders of the lake. Cocupao (modern Quiroga), Tzintzuntzan, and Erongarícuaro at that time were approximately 50 percent Spanish-speaking, and the city of Pátzcuaro, the colonial administrative and economic center of the Lake area, was less than 25 percent Tarascan in speech. Today the language of the former colonial hacienda districts around the lake is completely nonindigenous. These include the entire southern shore, the northeastern section, and many points along the western border.

191 The history of the southern shore represents a
177 typical example of the influence of haciendas on the hispanicization of native populations. By the mid-18th century large Spanish holdings had enveloped most of the native pueblos, contrary to laws which insured Indians a block of land (for

[27] The Sierra's unattractiveness to Spanish settlement is aptly described by the Franciscan friar, Diego Muñóz, writing in 1603 on the cultivated land near Capacuaro: ". . . y no son tierras para mas que yndios criados allí que las tienen curtidos y experimentados; que españoles las apetecen poco por ser tenpla rriguroso el mas frio de muchoaxeta acrecentandolo el ayre caso ordinario desabrido trecio y dejado y la yerua es aspera, ynutil para ganado." (AGN Congregaciones, f. 14).

[28] AAM, siglo XVIII, leg. 235 (1:46); leg. 277 (1758). In 1798, 10 *gente de razón* lived in Charapan, 6 in Parangaricutiro, 40 in Corupo (AAM siglo XIX, leg. 175).

buildings) measuring 600 yards (*varas*) in each cardinal direction from the village church. Deprived of land, most of the men of the pueblos sought work in the sugar plantations in the *tierra templada* around Ario and Tacámbaro, returning only occasionally to their homes. Others became peons in the adjacent haciendas, working with mulatto and mestizo labor (AGN Historia, vol. 73, ff. 292–306). Consequently, the decreased use and subsequent loss of the native language was inevitable. Only the fishers inhabiting the small Urandén Islands immediately offshore, who were unaffected by the haciendas, were able to preserve their native tongue.

MODERN LINGUISTIC DISTRIBUTIONS

The modern Tarascan area is in no sense a solid block of indigenous speech (table 1). The inhabitants of only 32 of the 66 Tarascan towns and 31 of the 50 indigenous *ranchos* all speak the native tongue (map 12). Nearly 25 percent of the population within the present area is composed of mestizos who know only Spanish. Such people are mainly merchants and *arrieros* living in most of the Indian pueblos and farmers inhabiting nonindigenous *ranchos* scattered throughout the Sierra and the Lake district. Fifty years ago native market centers, the towns of Nahuatzen and Tingambato now contain but a handful of people who have retained the indigenous language. [162] According to 1940 census figures, only 35 percent of the inhabitants of Patamban are Tarascan in speech, 38 percent of those of Parangaricutiro, 30 percent of those of Paracho, 20 percent of those of Sirosto, and 10 percent of those of Corupo.[29] Moreover, in 1940, 18 mestizo *ranchos* were scattered between Tarascan pueblos in the Sierra. In addition to mestizo merchants and farmers, many Spanish-speaking lumbermen inhabit the ephemeral sawmills prevalent in the Sierra forests. Hence, infiltrating mestizo settlement has shattered the once-continuous indigenous area in the Sierra and Lake district into small islets of purely Tarascan speech. The more notable of these islets are: (1) seven towns in La Cañada, (2) the pueblos and *ranchos* grouped around the flanks of Cerro de Patamban, (3) the Tarecuato district, (4) a string of villages east of Cerro de

[29] The percentage for Corupo is open to question. Although no actual statistical sampling was done, an impression of a much greater percentage of Tarascan-speaking inhabitants was obtained by the writer when he visited that town in 1945.

4: West K-5 (1946) 1948 NU34 Tarasco NU34
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191 Quirceo, and (5) the islands and adjacent shore
361 settlements of Lake Pátzcuaro (map 11). (See table 1.)

TABLE 1.—*Distribution of Tarascan-speaking folk by localities, 1940* [1]

[Data from official census, 1940]

THE SIERRA

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Locality [1a]	Total population (number)	Tarascan-speaking folk	
		Number	Percent
Municipio of Charapan:			
Charapan (p)	1,715	1,311	76.4
San Felipe (p)	857	795	89.5
Huancho (r)	20	20	100.0
Rancho Nuevo (r)	24	19	63.0
La Palma (r)	161	0	.0
Municipio of Cherán:			
Cherán (p)	3,388	2,969	87.6
Cosumo (r)	195	81	41.0
Tripiatiro (r)	24	20	83.7
Municipio of Chilchota:			
Huácato (r)	127	0	0
Los Nogales (r)	396	0	0
Rancho Seco (r)	60	0	0
El Pedregal (r)	118	0	0
Municipio of Erongaricuaro:			
Capes (r)	26	0	0
Porumbo (h)	49	0	0
La Zarzamora (r)	92	0	0
Zinciro (r)	413	0	0
Municipio of Los Reyes:			
Atapan (p)	1,001	357	35.6
Jesús Díaz (Sirio) (p)	606	606	100.0
Pamatácuaro (p)	1,382	1,372	99.2
Sicuicho (p)	819	709	86.5
Zacán (p)	876	439	50.1
Cherato (r)	271	261	96.3
La Providencia (r)	95	95	100.0
San Benito (r)	255	255	100.0
San Luis Soreua (r)	64	64	100.0
La Tinaja (r)	154	154	100.0
El Tropezón (r)	84	84	100.0
Uringuitiro (Juzgitiro) (r)	287	287	100.0
Zarzamora (r)	130	130	100.0
Querándaro (r)	60	60	100.0
La Mesa (r) [2]	[2] 120	120	100.0
San Marcos Arachúcuta (r) [3]	[3] 80	80	100.0
La Jolla (r) [3]	(?)	(?)	(?)
Tapan (r) [3]	[3] 80	80	100.0
Tierras Blancas (r) [3]	[3] 85	85	100.0
Venado (r) [3]	(?)	(?)	(?)
Municipio of Nahuatzen:			
Nahuatzen (p)	3,048	25	.7
Arantepacua (p)	660	660	100.0
Cumachuén (p)	1,058	1,039	98.2
Sevina (p)	881	876	99.4
Turicuaro (p)	749	749	100.0
La Mojonera (p)	831	0	0
El Padre (r)	94	0	0
El Pino (r)	183	0	0
San Isidro (r)	845	9	.1

[1] This table does not necessarily include statistics for all settlements within a given municipio. The boundaries of many municipios listed, such as Los Reyes and Pátzcuaro, extend beyond the present limits of Tarascan speech; in such cases many purely mestizo towns and ranchos have been omitted. However, all settlements containing Tarascan-speaking inhabitants are listed.

[1a] In this column (c)=ciudad; (v)=villa; (p)=pueblo; (r)=rancho; (rr)=railroad station; (h)=hacienda.

[TEXT CONTINUES TOP OF P. 19-a --- ANALYST]

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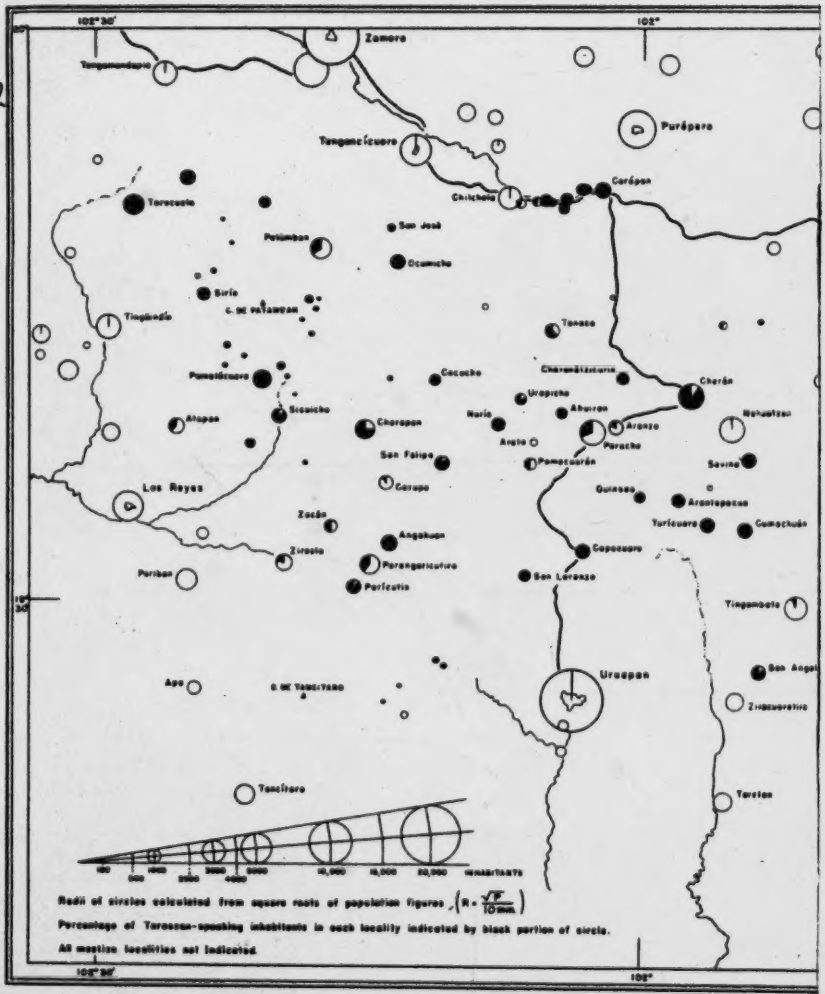

MAP 12.—Distribution of Tarascan speech by settlements, 1940. Based on official 1940 census da

[Facing page 18; section A.]

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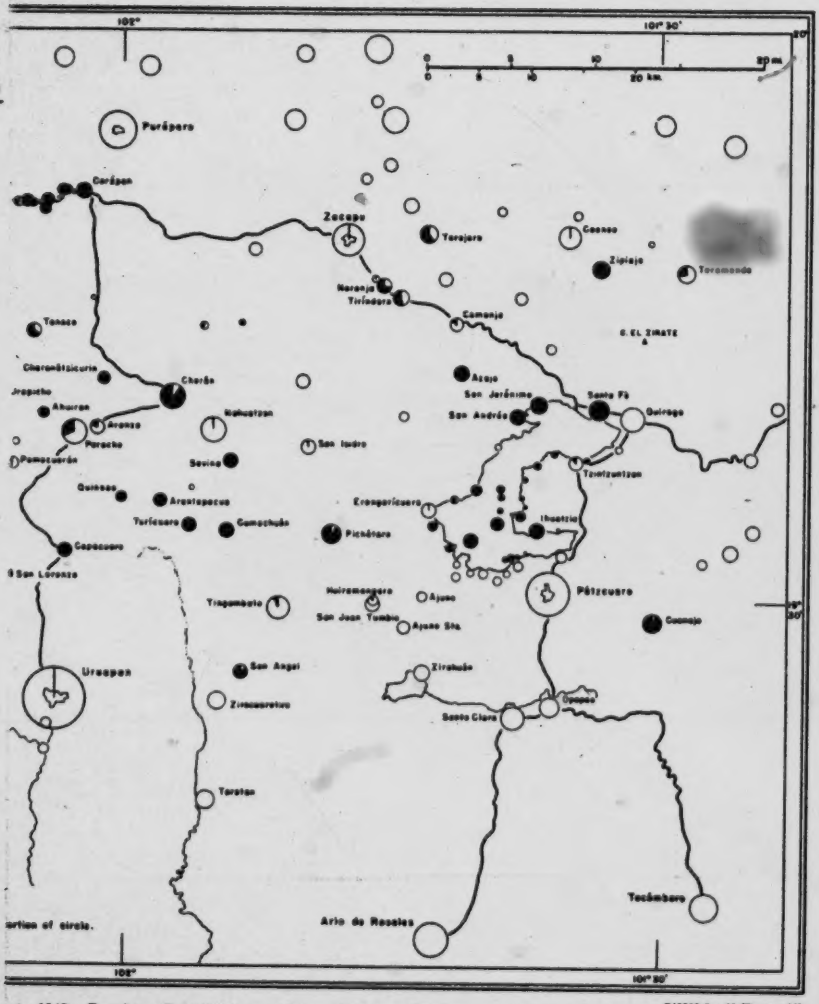

nts, 1940. Based on official 1940 census data. A few small Tarascan ranchos are not indicated. 748055 O - 46 (Face p. 18)

[Facing page 18; section B]

4: West K-5 (1946) 1948 NU34 Tarasco NU34
[P. 19-a]

TABLE 1.—*Distribution of Tarascan-speaking folk by localities, 1940*—Continued

THE SIERRA—Continued

Locality	Total population (number)	Tarascan-speaking folk	
		Number	Percent
Municipio of Paracho:			
Paracho (v)	3,304	1,005	30.4
Aluiran (p)	593	593	100.0
Aranza (p)	792	126	17.1
Arato (p)	233	0	0
Cocucho (p)	584	584	100.0
Cheranátzicurin (p)	751	751	100.0
Nurio (p)	810	784	96.7
Pomacuaran (p)	628	288	45.8
Quinceo (p)	482	482	100.0
Tanaco (p)	948	620	66.3
Urapicho (p)	541	422	78.0
Pacápitiro (r)	107	23	21.5
El Tejocote (r)	81	74	91.3
Municipio of Parangaricutiro:			
Parangaricutiro (p)	1,995	725	36.2
Angahuan (p)	1,098	1,098	100.0
Corupo (p)	813	85	10.4
Paricutin (p)	723	620	84.6
Zirosto (p)	1,314	269	20.5
La Alberca (r)	81	[4](?)	(?)
La Atascada (r)	74	[4](?)	(?)
Barranca Seca (r)	89	4	4.5
Canoa Alta (r)	21	0	0
Las Canoas (r)	113	0	0
La Cantera (r)	59	40	67.8
Las Cocinas (r)	[5] 0	0	0
Los Desmontes (r)	23	0	0
El Estudiante (r)	26	8	30.7
Huanondio (r)	80	0	0
Los Lobos (r)	29	0	0
Stipicha (r)	29	0	0
El Tejamanil (r)	84	0	0
El Tepemal (r)	51	44	90.0
El Tepetate (r) [3]	[3] 80	22	45.0
Municipio of Pátzcuaro:			
Cuanajo (p)	1,735	1,682	97.0
Huiramangaro (p)	540	17	3.1
San Juan Tumbio (p)	887	0	0
Ajuno (p)	540	0	0
Ajuno Sta. (rr)	719	0	0
Municipio of Tancítaro:			
Tancítaro (v)	1,838	6	.3
Apo (p)	876	0	0
Municipio of Tangamandapio:			
Tangamandapio (p)	2,573	12	.5
Tarecuato (p)	2,146	2,146	100.0
La Cantera (r)	962	962	100.0
Las Encinillas (r)	78	78	100.0
Los Laureles (r)	8	8	100.0
Ucuario (r)	306	0	0
Municipio of Tangancícuaro:			
Ocumicho (p)	1,040	1,013	97.3
Patamban (p)	2,333	809	34.6
San José de Gracia (p)	170	147	86.4
Agua Escondida (r)	33	33	100.0
Aranza (r)	54	21	39.0
Camécuaro (r)	37	2	5.4

[3] Locality not listed in 1940 census. Names obtained from local inhabitants.

[3] Estimated population.

[4] Entirely mestizo according to census, but 100 percent Tarascan according to officials in San'Juan Nuevo (Los Conejos) in 1946.

[5] Uninhabited in 1940, but estimated population in 1946 around 35, all Tarascan.

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[P. 196]

TABLE 1.—*Distribution of Tarascan-speaking folk by localities, 1940*—Continued

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THE SIERRA—Continued

Locality	Total population (number)	Tarascan-speaking folk	
		Number	Percent
Municipio of Tangancicuaro—Continued			
Las Cañas (r)	81	29	39.2
Guaracbanillo (r)	22	9	40.9
Rancho Nuevo (r)	38	3	8.0
Las Trojes (r)	14	0	0
El Tenguecho (r)	471	430	96.5
Municipio of Tingambato:			
Pichátaro (p)	1,877	1,740	92.7
Municipio of Tingüindín:			
Tingüindín (v)	2,897	15	.5
Tacátacuaro (p)	1,496	7	.4
Las Trojes (r)	45	0	0
Municipio of Uruapan:			
San Lorenzo (p)	575	575	100.0
Capacuaro (p)	785	778	99.1
Charangueran (r)	138	0	0
Los Conejos (San Juan Nuevo) (p) [8]	(?)	(?)	(?)
THE LAKE AREA			
Municipio of Erongaricuaro:			
Erongaricuaro (p)	1,309	14	1.1
Arócutín (p)	211	211	100.0
Jaricuaro (p)	875	875	100.0
Napizaro (p)	239	214	[7] 89.5
Puácuaro (p)	498	498	100.0
Uricho (p)	461	461	100.0
Nocutzepo (p)	409	0	0
Técuaro (p)	138	0	0
Lázaro Cárdenas (r)	214	0	0
Oponguio (r)	178	15	8.5
Revolución (r)	10	10	100.0
Municipio of Pátzcuaro:			
Pátzcuaro (c)	9,857	[8] (?)	(?)
Janitzio (p)	771	748	97.0
Ibarra (Pátzcuaro Sta.)	899	13	1.5
Huecorio (p)	499	0	0
Tzentzenguaro (p)	288	0	0
Lázaro Cárdenas (p)	413	0	0
Primo Tapia (p)	369	0	0
San Pedro Pareo (p)	284	0	0
Carián (r)	37	37	100.0
Tecuena (r)	73	73	100.0
Urandén Morales (r)	39	39	100.0
Urandén Morelos (r)	184	184	100.0
San Pedrito (r)	14	14	100.0
Yunuén (r)	116	116	100.0
Yuretzio (r)	170	14	8.2
Municipio of Quiroga:			
Quiroga (v)	3,609	4	.1
San Andrés (p)	1,179	1,165	98.8
San Jerónimo (p)	1,837	1,813	98.1
Santa Fé de la Laguna (p)	2,086	2,086	100.0
Atzimbo (r)	179	0	0
Chupícuaro (r)	31	0	0
Ichácato (r)	249	0	0
La Tirimicua (r)	82	0	0
Tziranda[illegible] (r)	24	0	0

[8] Inhabited 1944. Official census figures not available.

[7] In 1946, according to local inhabitants, Napizaro was only 30 percent Tarascan.

[8] Owing to loss of original census data, the number of Tarascans in Pátzcuaro could not be calculated. The percentage would probably be extremely low.

4: West K-5 (1946) 1948 NU34 Tarasco NU34
[P. 20-a]

TABLE 1.—*Distribution of Tarascan-speaking folk by localities, 1940*—Continued

THE LAKE AREA—Continued

Locality	Total population (number)	Tarascan-speaking folk	
		Number	Percent
Municipio of Tzintzuntzan:			
Tzintzuntzan (s)	1,677	25 (1 186)	2.2 (12.7)
Cucuchucho (p)	286	279	94.5
Ihuatzio (p)	1,206	1,206	100.0
La Pacanda (p)	247	240	97.1
Conzombo (r)	481	0	0
Las Corrales (r)	177	0	0
Las Cuevas (r)	60	0	0
Las Granadas (r)	93	92	100.0
Ichupio (r)	163	162	100.0
Ihuperdmucu (r)	46	15	32.9
La Noria (r)	23	0	0
El Ojo de Agua (r)	104	104	100.0
Petambicho (r)	261	0	0
Las Pilas (r)	67	0	0
Santa Cruz (r)	178	0	0
Taruro (r)	201	194	96.5
El Tecolote (r)	13	0	0
El Tigre (r)	119	0	0
Uconzastacua (r)	110	110	100.0
La Verdolaga (r)	76	0	0
La Vinata (r)	71	71	100.0
THE NORTHERN PLATEAU REGION			
Municipio of Cuneo:			
Cuneo (v)	2,430	6	.2
Azajo (p)	1,027	1,008	98.2
Cumanja (p)	806	91	11.3
Zipiajo (p)	1,211	1,202	99.4
Belisa Fuentes (h)	876	1	.1
Laredo (r)	345	1	.3
Matupso (r)	484	0	0
Tunguitiro (r)	749	2	.2
Municipio of Ecuapu:			
Ecuapu (v)	6,169	14	.2
Cantabria (p)	1,139	0	0
Naranja (p)	1,082	763	70.5
Tarejero (p)	1,457	891	61.1
Tiridaro (p)	1,202	666	54.6
Buenavista (h)	234	7	3.1
Lázaro Cárdenas (r)	121	2	1.2
San Antonio (r)	209	0	0
Municipio of Morelia:			
Morelia (c)	44,204	23	.07
Tarecuendo (p)	1,231	579	26.4
Tres Puentes (r)	176	6	3.4
LA CAÑADA			
Municipio of Chilchota:			
Chilchota (p)	2,479	9	.4
Azcuzuda (p)	717	713	99.3
Carapan (p)	1,239	1,240	98.5
Huáquito (p)	789	789	98.8
Ichán (p)	779	776	100.0
Santo Tomás (p)	286	282	98.0
Tocuro (p)	445	445	100.0
Tanaquillo (p)	439	194	44.9
Urén (p)	240	238	99.6
Zacapu (p)	339	339	100.0

[1] Number and percentage of Tarascans in Tzintzuntzan, 1945, according to ethnographical census. The percentage was calculated on the basis of 1,251 inhabitants in Tzintzuntzan.

4: West K-5 (1946) 1948 NU34 Tarasco NU34
[P 20-b]

TABLE 1.—*Distribution of Tarascan-speaking folk by localities, 1940*—Continued

LA CAÑADA—Continued

Locality	Total population (number)	Tarascan-speaking folk	
		Number	Percent
Municipio of Chilchota—Continued			
La Cofradía (r)	69	0	0
Tzintzicha (r)	117	48	41.0
Municipio of Tangancícuaro:			
Tangancícuaro (v)	4,793	10	.2
Etúcuaro (p)	871	9	1.0

TIERRA TEMPLADA

Municipio of Ziracuaretiro:			
San Angel Zurumucapio (p)	970	823	84.7
Municipio of Tingambato:			
Tingambato (p)	2,798	204	7.3
Municipio of Uruapan:			
Uruapan (c)	20,588	111	.5
Jucutácato (p)	800	8	1.0
La Rosa de Castilla (r)	60	2	3.3
Toreo Alto (r)	240	3	1.2
Caltzontzin (p)[a]	(?)	(?)	(?)
Municipio of Ario de Rosales:			
Villa Silva (p)[a]	(?)	(?)	(?)

[a] Inhabited 1943. Official census figures not available.

Distribution of monolingual Tarascans.—In spite of continued areal recession of native speech and infiltration of mestizos, monolingualism still exists in many parts of Tarasca. According to calculations from 1940 census data, approximately 38 percent of the Tarascan population is monolingual. Personal field experience, however, would indicate that a smaller proportion (probably 20 percent) speak only Tarascan. The monolinguals are composed principally of conservative women and girls and the older men living in the more isolated pueblos and *ranchos*. Pronounced monolingual centers are scattered through the Tarascan area and correspond to the islets of purely indigenous speech mentioned above (map 13). One center includes the *ranchos* around the Cerro de Patamban and also the majority of women in the pueblos of Pamatácuaro, Sicuicho, and Sirio, nearby. (According to data from the 1940 census, approximately 67 percent of the Tarascan population of this area is monolingual. Following percentages in this paragraph are calculated from the 1940 census.) Another center includes Tarecuato and the adjacent *rancho* of La Cantera (66 percent monolingual). Still another area is situated southwest of Nahuatzen, and consists of the pueblos of Quinceo, Turícuaro,

[TEXT CONTINUES BOTTOM OF P. 22 b—ANALYST]

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that a new upward trend has been established. On the other hand, there has been a considerable increase in the population of the Sierra and Lake towns since 1750, which probably accounts for the level curve during the 19th century, in spite of drastic areal recession in speech during that period (fig. 2). Today areal recession is still in progress, but actual numbers of Tarascans appear to be increasing. The question is: Can the growth in number of Tarascan-speaking children continue to exceed or equal that of the children (of Tarascan speaking parents) who fail to learn the language or cease to use it in later life? Assuming equal rates of infant mortality and similar health facilities for both groups, it would appear that, owing to cultural changes now in progress within the Tarascan area, the indigenous speech will eventually dis-

[TEXT CONTINUES TOP OF P. 24b — ANALYST]

TARASCAN SETTLEMENTS

The early Spanish adventurers and friars found Tarascans living (like many sedentary Indians of the New World) in agglomerated settlements, the larger of which the Spaniards called pueblos, the smaller, *rancherías* or *estancias*. The pueblo and the *ranchería* (*rancho*) have remained the basic units of settlement in the Tarascan area, as in most parts of Mexico.[33] In size present Tarascan pueblos range from 200 to 3,400 inhabitants; the ranchos, from 9 to 900. Invariably the modern indigenous ranchos are offspring settlements from a pueblo nearby. For instance, the 11 ranchos on the southern and eastern slopes of Cerro de Patamban were formed by families, which for political or economic (land) reasons, left the mother pueblo, Pamatácuaro. Sirío, a former *rancho* of Pamatácuaro, was made a pueblo and *tenencia* ca. 1926, its name being changed to Jesús Díaz. By such a process agglomerated settlements begin and develop. Moreover, the *ranchos* on the Tarí-uk'éri Peninsula, Lake Pátzcuaro, were founded 50 or 60 years ago by fisher-

[TEXT CONTINUES BOTTOM P. 24b — ANALYST]

[33] Although in general these two types of settlement are differentiated by size, the terms "pueblo" and "rancho" have acquired political connotations. From the point of view of State and Federal Governments the basic political unit in Mexico is the municipio, which may contain many pueblos and ranchos. Usually the largest pueblo within this political unit is named the *cabecera*, or chief administrative town. The affairs of the *cabecera* and those of the municipio as a whole are administered by a *presidente* or mayor. The remaining pueblos in the municipio are regarded as *tenencias*, each headed by a *jefe*. The ranchos are dependencies of certain pueblos, local authority being vested in the *diputado de orden*. Upon obtaining sufficient size, prestige, or political influence, a pueblo may be elevated to the rank of *villa* or even *ciudad*. Because of historical prestige small (1,677 mestizo inhabitants) Tzintzuntzan holds the title of *ciudad*. Such rank, however, in no way changes the political function of the town.

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[P. 24-b]

appear. Such cultural changes—improved transportation, more frequent contact with modern life, increased educational facilities both within the pueblos and in the large towns outside, the Government alphabetization program—all aid to increase the use of Spanish and to decrease the use of Tarascan. Such factors influence especially the younger generation. Today the young people (5 to 20 years old) of many pueblos have not learned Tarascan, and often those who know the language speak Spanish by preference. Moreover, as indicated above, mestizo merchants are still moving into the Tarascan market towns and in such centers intermarriage of Indian and mestizo continues; the offspring of such unions rarely learn the indigenous tongue.

TARASCAN SETTLEMENTS

men from adjacent islands of Janitzio and Lo Pacanda. On the other hand, the mestizo *ranchos* now found in the Sierra are the product of migration of farmers and political refugees from the outside. One of these, Arato, was established soon after the struggle for independence in 1810, and in the 1930's was given the title of pueblo with *tenencia* status.

Other types of settlement in modern Tarasca include the lumber camp (*aserradero*), an ephemeral agglomeration of workmen's huts around the sawmill. Such settlements disappear after surrounding exploitable timber has been depleted. In 1946 there were but three lumber camps in the entire Sierra. In addition, a minor form of dispersed settlement is sometimes found in the Sierra; occasionally a woodcutter and his family live permanently in an isolated house on a forested mountain slope and visit the nearest pueblo only to market products, buy supplies, and attend fiestas.

Settlement sites.—The few available early descriptions of the Tarascan area indicate the existence of many more Indian settlements during the 16th century than at present.[23] This was particularly true in the Sierra, where small agglomerations (*estancias* or *rancherías*) were numerous. Such settlements were scattered on

[23] The early sources which mention former settlements in the Tarascan area include the available Relaciones Geográficas, 1579-81 (Mss. Nac., leg. 103); various late 16th-century documents concerning labor and associated problems in Zavala and Castillo (1580-86); many documents concerning the congregations of 1526-1606 found in AGN Congregaciones and Tierras.

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361 wooded mountain slopes (where maize could be easily cultivated with the digging stick) and on elevations difficult of access (chiefly for protection from Chichimec raids). Many of these *estancias* were likely wiped out by the early epidemics; [177] others the Spaniards probably congregated with larger towns during the last half of the 16th and first years of the 17th centuries (Simpson, 1934; Spain—Law, Statutes, etc., 1681, ley VI, tit. 3), in order to better instruct natives in Christianity and to facilitate the collection of tribute and forced labor. Probably few present Tarascan pueblos possess their pre-Spanish sites.

Modern Tarascan settlements occupy a variety of sites, most of which have level, or nearly level, surfaces. Those along Lake Pátzcuaro are on eminences or shelves above the water's edge; all avoid frequently flooded delta plains. In the Sierra many towns are located on slopes or benches immediately bordering the large basin plains; others occupy level spots in local swales. A few, such as Urapicho, Cocucho, Quinceo, and Ocu-

361 micho, occupy benches on hill slopes. With the exception of Paracho, Sierra settlements avoid the centers of basin flats. Likely, many villages were moved from pre-Conquest mountain sites to present locations near abundant plow land. The inhabitants of Urapicho, for example, tell a legend concerning the former location of their pueblo on the high slopes of the Cerro de Urapicho nearby. Formerly many of the La Cañada pueblos occupied protective slope and hill sites in the surrounding mountains, but after the end of the 16th century they were concentrated in their present locations in the alluvial floor of the valley (map 14).

312 [361] **Settlement and water supply.**—One of the most significant factors in the location of Tarascan settlements has been water supply. Aside from the Lake pueblos, almost every town in Tarasca is located near a spring. While the northern plateau and southern escarpment areas abound in springs, the Sierra has ever been a problem area in terms of water supply. In pre-Conquest

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[P. 25 c] La Cañada

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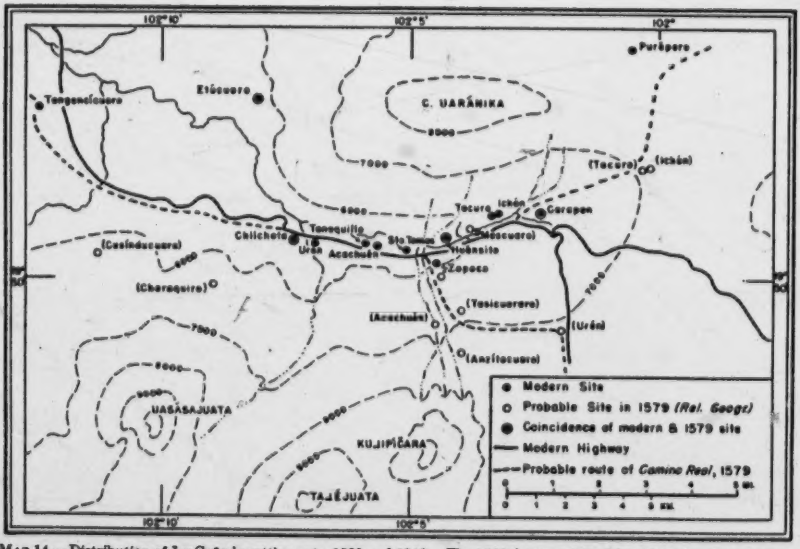

MAP 14.—Distribution of La Cañada settlements, 1580 and 1946. The 1580 data are from Mus. Nac., leg. 102, Relación de Chilchota, 1579. The towns of Tacuro and Ichán still retain their old lands east of Charapan.

[361] Plans of settlements.—The planning of pueblos and *rancherías* was unknown in pre-Columbian times. Settlements were amorphous, the dwellings irregularly spaced and connected by winding footpaths. Beginning around 1550, the Spaniards [177] slowly forced the natives in most parts of central Mexico to rebuild their towns on a grid street pattern, which is now predominant in most pueblos (Indian and mestizo) in Mexico.[34] The advantages of the grid, with numbered blocks and houses, are obvious in terms of tax and tribute records. Towns were also divided into *barrios* or wards, usually four or more; some *barrios* represent the congregation of outlying *rancherías* into the town. Within the Tarascan area the realinement of the street pattern was apparently continued until the close of the colonial period, for a late 18th-century description mentions the tortuous, unplanned paths and irregularly spaced houses of some Sierra pueblos, which today have the grid pattern (AGN Historia, vol. 73, ff. 285–405). At the present time only the Tarascan *ranchos* (formed after the colonial period without direction from a centralized government) are characterized by winding streets and scattered dwellings, and probably illustrate the pattern of a pre-Conquest village (map 15).

One of the outstanding features of the grid pattern imposed by the Spaniards is the plaza, or square, located in the center of the settlement. Every Tarascan village has its plaza, which functions as the commercial, social, and administrative center of the town (map 16; pl. 2). A [361] semblance of a garden and often a bandstand occupy the center of the plaza. Administrative [344] buildings (the *palacio municipal* or *jefetura* and the jail), often the school, stores, and the dwellings of the more prominent citizens face the streets bordering the plaza. Moreover, the square is the site of religious and civil festivals and the market. [346] The church, however, rarely faces the plaza, but is often placed one-half to one block distant.

Away from the plaza, which in the larger towns is surrounded by a contiguous group of buildings, most Tarascan pueblos in the Sierra are characterized by widely spaced dwellings separated by house lots. Compact towns with contiguous building throughout occur in the Lake region and in the Zacapu Basin. (Maps 16, 17; pl. 2.)

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[34] For a discussion of the introduction of the grid street pattern into New Spain, see Stanislawski, 1947 b.

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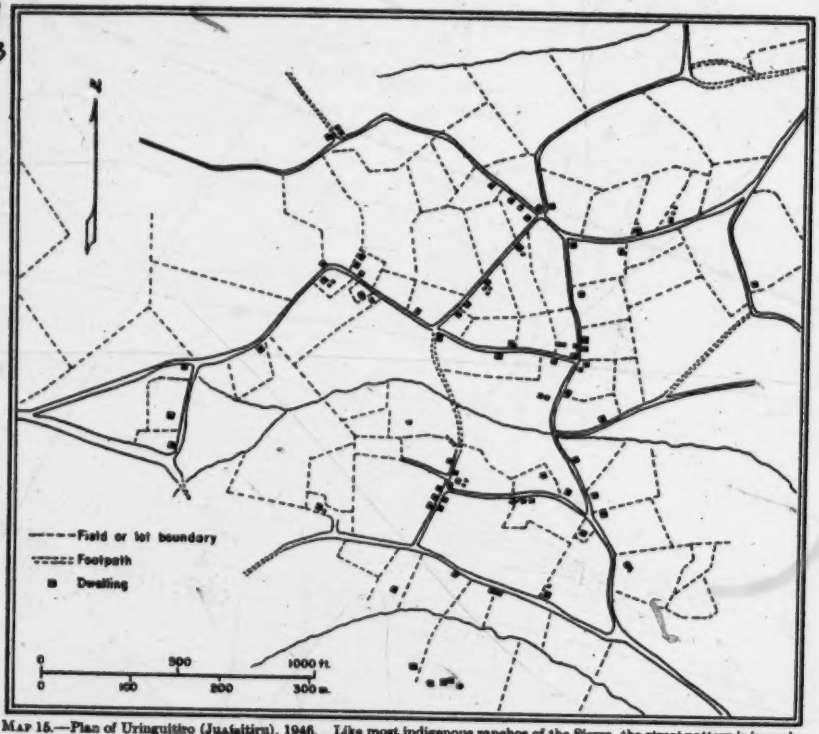

MAP 15.—Plan of Uringuitiro (Juaíqitiru), 1946. Like most indigenous ranchos of the Sierra, the street pattern is irregular and dwellings are widely spaced.

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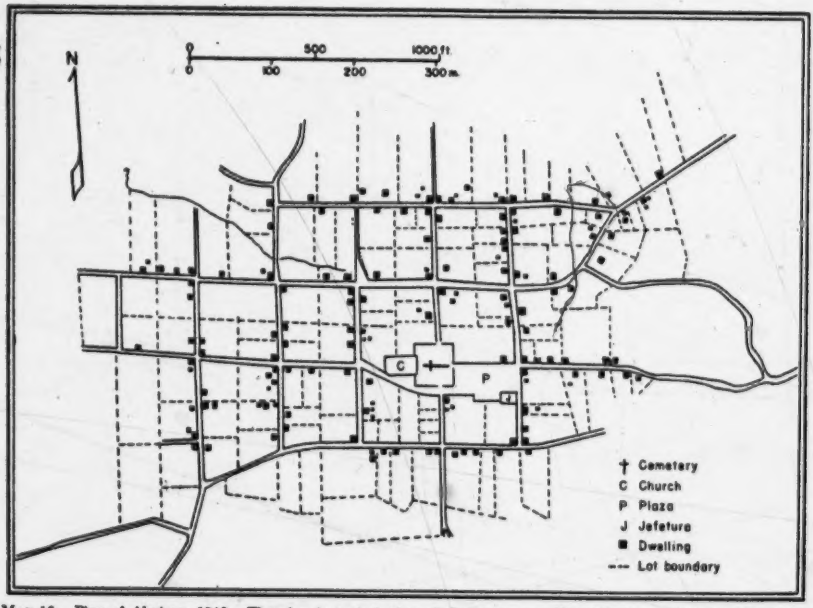

MAP 16.—Plan of Ahuiran, 1946. The plan is typical of small Sierra towns. Note the scattered dwellings and lot (ekuśAu) boundaries.

[P. 29-a]

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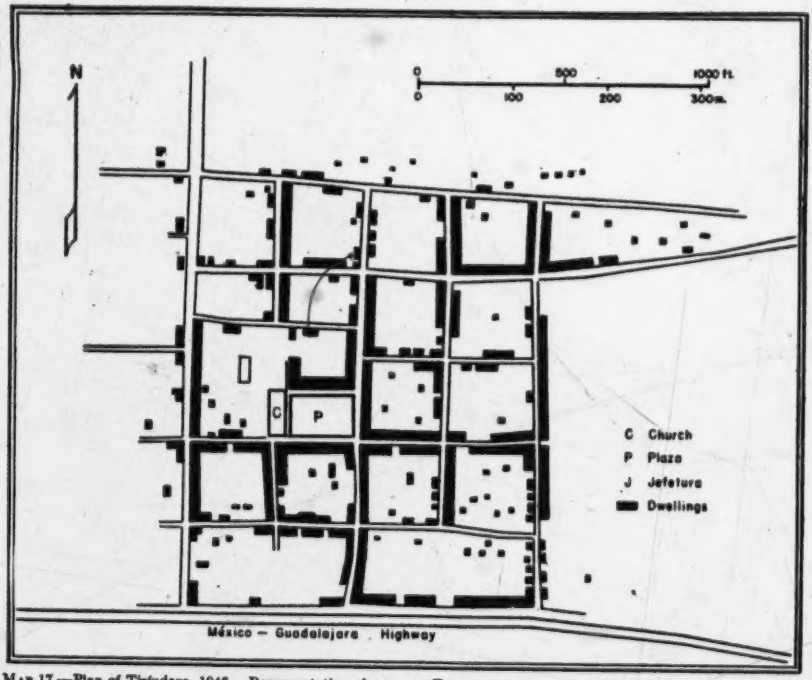

MAP 17.—Plan of Tirindaro, 1946. Representative of compact Tarascan towns, most of which occur in areas bordering the Sierra.

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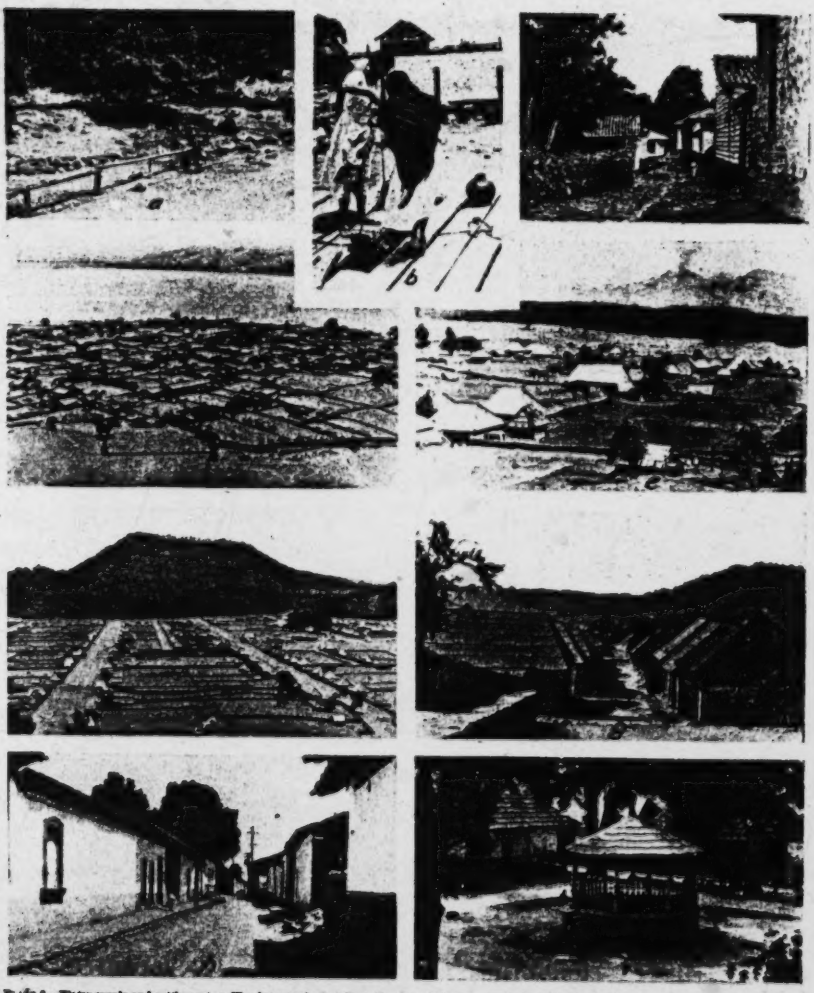

PLATE 2.—Water supply and settlement. *a*, Wooden aqueduct at Pamatácuaro, which brings water from the local spring (center) to the outskirts of town. *b*, Hoisting water from one of the public wells in Charapan. *c*, Street in Ihuatzio, Lake Pátzcuaro. *d*, Panorama of San Jerónimo on Lake Pátzcuaro, showing compact assemblage of adobe structures. *e*, Partial view of Zacán near Paricutín Volcano (background), showing grid street pattern, scattered dwellings, and large lots. *f*, Los Conejos (San Juan Nuevo), founded in 1944 to house refugees from destroyed San Juan Parangaricutiro. Nearly all dwgs were transported from old San Juan and reassembled on the new site. *g*, Street scene, Charapan (Sierra). *h*, Street scene, Tirindaro, Basque Basin. *i*, Plaza at Charapan.

[End-plate 2]

11: Boyd H-4, 5 (1953) 1958
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[p. 1]

INTRODUCTION

Prehistoric Tarascans, residing for centuries in the lake country of Michoacán, Mexico, asked questions about things around them. They asked why the land was sometimes flat, sometimes hilly, sometimes rich, and sometimes poor. They wanted to know why the precious waters of a spring suddenly erupted from beneath a tree on the hillside. They felt that the wonderful light-giving sun, the hurrying stream, the glittering stars, and the rustling leaves all required explanation.

Before the Spanish Conquest, the oral accounts of the *Petamuti* (high priest) explained the phenomena of nature through the great deeds of Tarascan gods and culture heroes. Knowledge of historical events was similarily preserved.

Some of these stories, to which Catholic and modern elements have been added, are still "history" to the native Tarascans living in isolated pueblos in the mountains. As with many people, it is what the Tarascans believe to be the historical truth, rather than the actual history itself, which most profoundly influences their thoughts and actions.

BACKGROUND OF THE LEGENDS

The Tarascan area has contracted since the time of the Spanish Conquest. Located approximately 250 miles northwest of Mexico City in the State of Michoacán, it centers in several geographic areas which form a fairly continuous block.

In the area around Zacapu (Fig. 1), traditional point of origin of the Tarascan dynasty, remain a few purely Tarascan villages. Bordering the Mexico City-Guadalajara highway a few miles northwest of Zacapu is a small, pleasant valley approximately a mile wide and six miles long. It is called La Cañada and in it nestle ten of the Once Pueblos of pre-Conquest days.

11: Boyd H-4, 5 (1953) 1958
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ten of the *Once Pueblos* of pre-Conquest days.

South of La Cañada stretches an elevated area of high mountains which cradle wide and fertile valleys. This is the fabled La Sjerra country.

East of La Sierra the land falls away to the lower elevation of the lake country which includes the basins of Lake Cuitzeo and Lake Pátzcuaro. The latter, horseshoe in shape with the curve at the west and the two prongs to the east, has its northern and western shores dotted with Tarascan villages. Within the fastness of the lake lie three important Tarascan islands: Janitzio, an astonishingly enormous rock rising high above the blue expanse, with its picturesque fishing village clinging to one side; Jarácuaro, wide and flat, with its village of hat weavers; and La Pacanda, high and flat, with its farms sitting up above the water's edge.

These areas form the solid nucleus of the Tarascan country, whose people, with surprising vigor, resist outside influences threatening to destroy their traditional way of life.

This is a hilly country with conifers on the highest slopes. The lower hills are starred in the summer rainy season with bright red, clear yellow, and delicate violet wildflowers. Michoacán does not become drab even in the dry season, but rather takes on the colors of old tapestries. Its soil is reddish or saffron, its houses dusty white to deep gray, its roofs brownish red, and its lakes azure blue.

Into this area came the ancestors of the Tarascans sometime between the seventh and twelfth centuries of our era. The German scholar Seler (1908, p. 33), in his interpretation of a questionable sixteenth-century codex called the "Lienzo de Jucutacato," argues that they entered the region in the seventh century, but archaeological evidence does not seem to support such an early date. Certainly by the twelfth century they were located in the Lake Pátzcuaro region, in Zacapu, and in La Sierra at Patamban and Tarecuato (Fig. 1).

In olden days the Tarascans were fierce fighters who, over a period of time, forged an empire which successfully repulsed attacks by Aztec armies. It was their hatred of the Aztecs that

[Text continues on p. 4]

[P.3]

INTRODUCTION

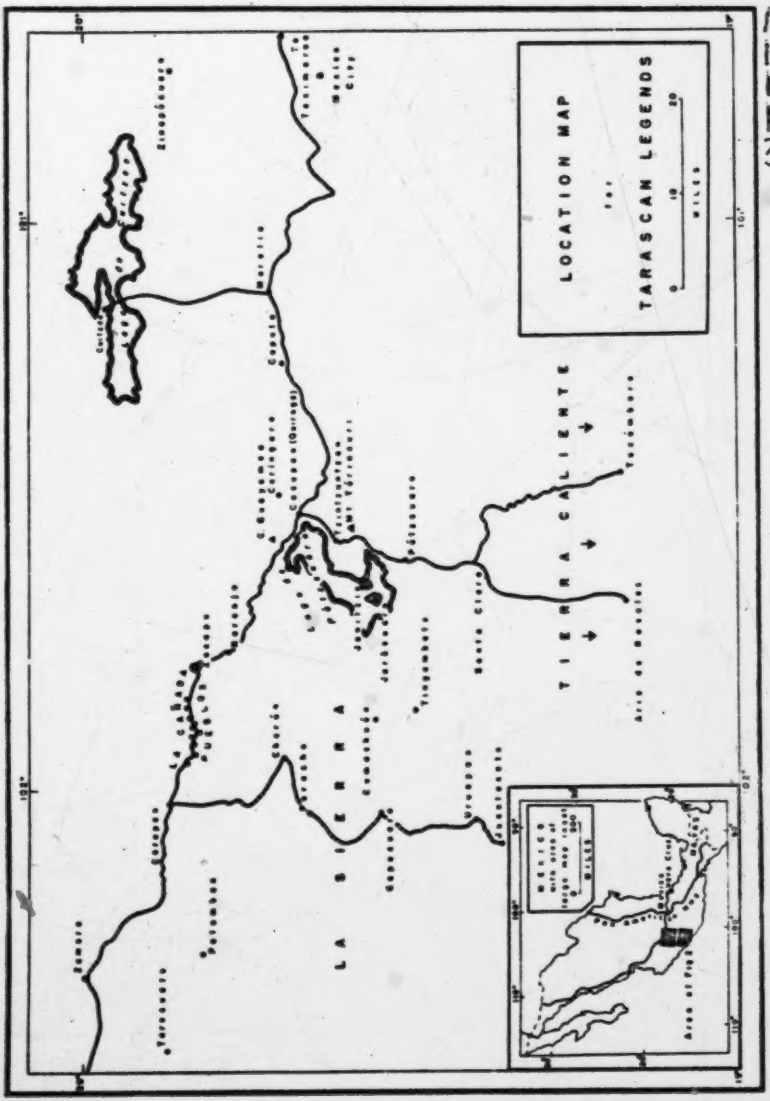

Fig. 1. Map of the Tarascan Area.

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11: Boyd H-4, 5 (1953) 1958
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of the town of Cuitzeo; the other stories were told by Manuel Valenzuela, a former guide around Tzintzuntzan, in his uniquely exciting, urbane style.

Told and retold for generations in their native tongue, these tales were rendered orally in the Spanish of the region and translated into English by the author.

The stories have a continuity dating back to the sixteenth century (Ruiz, 1940). The exact phraseology varies with the individual

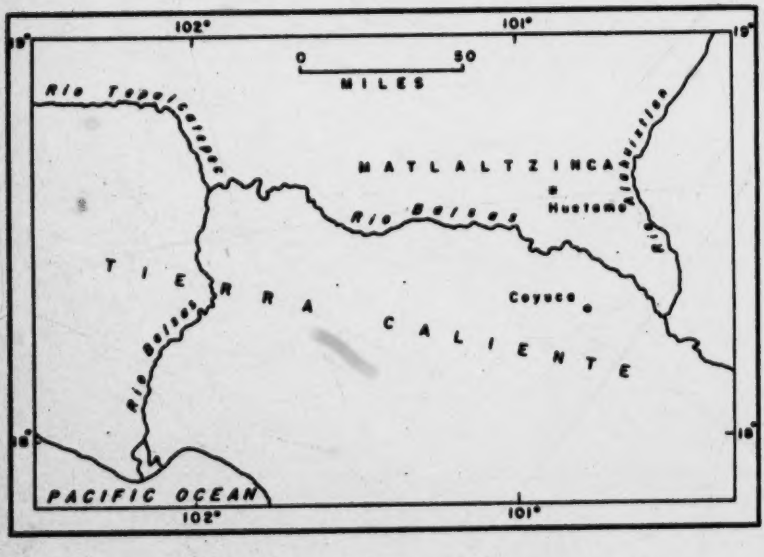

Fig. 2. Map of the Tierra Caliente of Michoacán

narrator, and his rendition usually conforms to the peculiar orientation given by his native pueblo. Some of these legends were published in Spanish by Ruiz in 1940, but this presentation represents their first appearance in English. The Ruiz versions are more elaborate than those presented herein and thereby form an interesting comparison.

11: Boyd H-4, 5 (1953) 1958
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539 823 At daybreak the astonished king and warriors beheld, instead of a flourishing valley, a lake whose waters formed the shape of a heart.

These things occurred many years ago, but each morning Father Huriata continues to kiss with his first rays of light the crystal-clear waters created by Princess Hapunda, the beautiful "Tzinzi-quin."

QUIRITZÍCUARO (THE GREAT FOUNTAIN)

Historical Comment

312 [539] [361] The legend of Quiritzícuaro refers to one of the most significant factors in the life of the Tarascans—a needed spring to furnish a constant supply of fresh water. Almost every town in Michoacán is located beside a lake or is near a spring. While the territory to the north and to the south of La Sierra abounds in springs, their scarcity in La Sierra itself has always been a problem. In pre-Conquest times, many towns supplemented the flow from the local spring by constructing aqueducts of hollowed half-logs to bring in water from springs some distance away. This method is still used in many of the pueblos of La Sierra.

312 584 [178] The discovery of a new spring has been charmingly linked with a tradition existing for centuries in the highland pueblos of La Sierra, where the young people carry on their limited courtship while walking to and from the water fountain. The maiden loiters and gazes across the fields, never facing her suitor directly, and listens as he talks to her. His presence on the road to the fountain, although understood by the townspeople and usually prearranged with the girl, must give the appearance of being quite accidental.

361 49 [539] The pueblo of Paracho, referred to in the legend, is one of three significant Tarascan villages on the road that leaves the main highway at Carapan and winds southward for forty-five miles through pine and oak woods and small cultivated valleys to Uruapan (Fig. 1). Paracho is still primitively picturesque. The town's

11: Boyd H-4, 5 (1953) 1958
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poor have only pain and sorrow. The poor is our brother; the rich is our master. Love the poor; he is of our race. The rich is the foreigner; he pays us with sarcasm and jokes. Remember always that he who suffers and cries needs your help. These are the maxims of love.

THE LEGEND OF TACAMBA

Historical Comment

175 13 642 [36] [33] [648]

All the drainage of southwestern Michoacán is southward to the Balsas river, the heart of the tropical region. This area was in pre-Spanish times seemingly under Tarascan domain (Osborne, 1943). Coyucán, mentioned in the legend of Tacamba as being one of the seats of Tarascan power at the beginning of the sixteenth century, is probably the town of Coyuca, a scant thirty-five miles south of present Huetamo (Fig. 2). At the time of the Conquest it was still an area of dispute between the Tarascans and the Aztecs, although both sides were temporarily at peace.

175 648 [643]

The wars between the Tarascans and Aztecs over this area accounted in large part for the refusal of Siguangua and Tzimtzicha to lend Tarascan support to the Aztecs against the Spaniards, thereby enabling the conquistadores to defeat both empires separately.

175 73 164 648 539 [631]

Tacamba, like Camachuén of the preceding legend, was one of the vassal princes of the Tarascan empire under King Siguanga and Tzimtzicha, his successor, at the time of the coming of the Spaniards. The death of Siguangua is accurately preserved in the body of the legend. In the first year of the Spanish arrival on the borders of Michoacán, smallpox and dysentery brought by Spanish messengers struck the Tarascan capital killing the king and his chief priests. The epidemic continued to take a terrible toll among the native population, weakening the Tarascans for the Spanish Conquest.

11: Boyd H-4, 5 (1953) 1958
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[End Plate 1]

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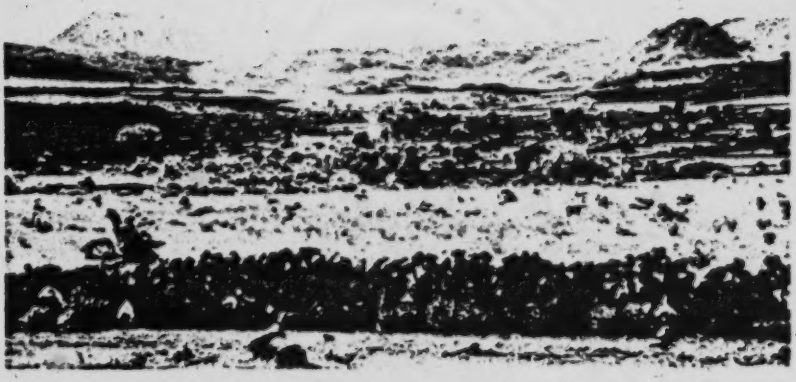

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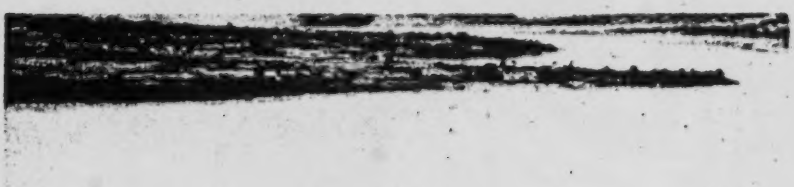

Plate I. Views of Tarascan Countryside

[115] *Upper*, looking towards village of Copula, home of Luis Espinosa, one of the narrators.

Lower, looking across Lake Pátzcuaro from top of island of Janitzio.